

Amendments to the Claims

Kindly amend claims 1, 2, 6 & 15, cancel claims 12-14 (without prejudice), and add new claims 23 & 24, as set forth below. All pending claims are reproduced below, with changes in the amended claims shown by underlining (for added matter) and strikethrough/double brackets (for deleted matter).

1. (Currently Amended) A method of effecting improvement of an organization comprising:

ascertaining through research with customers of the organization desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective, the desired characteristics comprising what the customers would like to see from the organization;

subsequent to the ascertaining, employing the leadership of the organization to define cultural characteristics for an effected population of the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with the customers of the organization, the effected population being at least one of members of the organization that are customer-facing or members of the organization with direct revenue-generating responsibility;

defining by the leadership of the organization the cultural characteristics in behavioral terms;

~~subsequently~~ subsequent to the defining, identifying defined cultural characteristics which are not already present in the organization or present characteristics of the organization which are inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

generating at least one action plan for changing the effected population of the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics within the organization and diminish any identified present characteristics inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

training the leadership to conduct a focus session and explain the defined cultural characteristics and the at least one action plan;

employing leadership of the organization to validate the cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms and the at least one action plan with at least one focus group comprising, at least in part, first line managers of the effected population within the organization, the validating comprising tuning and prioritizing the cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms and the at least one action plan; and

once validated, implementing the ~~at least one action plan~~ cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms across at least a portion the effected population of the organization using, in part, the at least one action plan validated by leadership of the organization with the at least one focus group comprising, at least in part, first line managers within the effected population of the organization.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning individuals within the organization to implement the at least one action plan among ~~at least some members~~ the effected population of the organization, and wherein the effecting improvement of the organization comprises enhancing productivity of ~~members~~ the effected population of the organization.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the enhancing productivity of members comprises enhancing at least one of sales productivity or service productivity of members of the organization.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the employing leadership to define the cultural characteristics in behavioral terms comprises employing leadership to define the cultural characteristics as desired sales behavioral characteristics.

5. (Previously PResented) The method of claim 1, wherein the leadership comprises at least one senior sales leader of the organization, and the managers comprise first line managers of sales members of the organization.

6. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

obtaining defined cultural characteristics for an effected population of an organization expressed in behavioral terms, the defined cultural characteristics for the effected population of the organization being obtained employing desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective ascertained through research with customers of the organization, the desired characteristics comprising what the customers would like to see from the organization, and the effected population being at least one of members of the organization that are customer-facing or members of the organization with direct revenue-generating responsibility;

training a recruiter for the organization on the defined cultural characteristics of the organization;

during an interview with an applicant for the effected population, having the recruiter describe the defined cultural characteristics of the organization;

asking the applicant to relate past education or employment behavior to the defined cultural characteristics of the organization as a means of facilitating an assessment of the degree of cultural matching between the applicant and the organization; [[and]]

hiring the applicant if, in part, there is a sufficient degree of match between the applicant's described past education or employment behavior and the defined cultural characteristics of the organization; and

after hiring the applicant, further training the applicant about the cultural characteristics of the organization, wherein said training comprises at least one of taking a corporate level class, reviewing a master checklist, or taking a solutions operations class, the solutions operations class including training in customer support services, distributed servers, e-business delivery services and enterprise services.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein said obtaining cultural characteristics for the organization comprises employing leadership of the organization to define cultural characteristics for the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with customers of the organization.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said obtaining cultural characteristics further comprises employing leadership of the organization to validate the cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms with at least one organization focus group comprising, at least in part, managers within the organization.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising assessing a degree of match between the applicant's described education or employment behavior and the cultural characteristics of the organization, and wherein said hiring comprises hiring the applicant if, in part, the degree of match is acceptable.

10. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the organization is at least one of a sales providing organization or a service providing organization.

11. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising determining hiring targets for the organization, and wherein said hiring further comprises hiring enough applicants having an acceptable degree of match using said method to meet the hiring targets.

12-14. (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended) A method of effecting improvement of an organization comprising:

defining cultural characteristics for an effected population of an organization employing desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective ascertained through research with customers of the organization, the desired characteristics comprising what the customers would like to see from the organization, and the effected population being at least one of members of the organization that are customer-facing or members of the organization with direct revenue-generating responsibility;

developing in a workshop attended by leaders of the organization shared executive norms for the leaders of the organization comprising behavioral expressions for the leaders of the defined cultural characteristics, the workshop using divergent or convergent brainstorming techniques;

initially implementing the shared executive norms only among at least some leaders of the organization for a period time;

subsequent to said implementing, generating at least one action plan for changing the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics within the effected population of the organization and diminish any present characteristics inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

employing at least one leader of the at least some leaders initially implementing the shared executive norms to validate the at least one action plan with a focus group comprising first line managers ~~or members~~ of the effected population of the organization; and

once validated, implementing the ~~at least one action plan~~ cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms across at least a portion the effected population of the organization using, in part, the at least one action plan validated by leadership of the organization within the at least one focus group comprising, at least in part, first line managers within the effected population of the organization.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein said defining comprises employing leadership of the organization to define the cultural characteristics of the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with the customers of the organization.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising, prior to said implementing, developing at least one action plan for implementing the shared executive norms among at least some leaders of the organization, and wherein said implementing comprises employing said at least one action plan in implementing the shared executive norms among the at least some leaders of the organization for the period of time.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising, prior to said implementing, validating the action plan for implementing the shared executive norms, said validating being performed using a focus group comprising leaders of the organization.

19. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said implementing comprises implementing the shared executive norms among at the least some leaders of the organization for at least several months prior to proceeding with generating of an action plan for changing the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics across the organization.

20. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising prior to generating the at least one action plan, identifying defined cultural characteristics which are not already present in the organization or present characteristics of the organization which are inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics.

21. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising measuring progress in implementing the at least one action plan across the at least one portion of the organization.

22. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the effecting improvement of the organization comprises enhancing productivity of members of the organization, and wherein the enhancing productivity of members comprises enhancing at least one of sales productivity or service productivity of members of the organization.

23. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the effected population of the organization comprises a sales population, and the cultural characteristics include: being customer focused, leveraging and integrating team organization, celebrating accomplishments, taking pride and having passion for the organization's technology and services, being proud, confident and successful, being supported by the entire organization, and being driven to win.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein generating the at least one action plan includes:

defining an explicit action;

determining how to measure success or progress; and

determining how to implement the action plan to ensure success.

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